

SUPPLEMENT TO  
REPORT NO.

DATE OF IN [REDACTED] 25X1X

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This document is hereby regraded to CONFIDENTIAL in accordance with the letter of 16 October 1978 from the Director of Central Intelligence to the Archivist of the United States.

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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

25X1A

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Viet Minh authorities in Bangkok, and communications between them and Ho Chi Minh headquarters were exchanged on possible future usefulness of the Lao leader. Several days later the message came from Ho Chi Minh to Souphanavong, stating that President Ho had always been anxious to co-operate with Souphanavong and inviting him to come see President Ho in person.\* Souphanavong is thus once again enjoying Viet Minh favor.\*\*

25X1A [REDACTED] reported the invitation to visit Viet Nam extended by Ho Chi Minh to Prince Souphanavong and Souphanavong's departure for Viet Nam. [REDACTED] reported that Prince Souphanavong did not intend to return to Bangkok in the near future.

25X1X \*\* [REDACTED] The Viet Minh is interested in Princes Petcharat and Souphanavong mainly for propaganda value, to show the world that the Laotian affair is far from settled.

25X1A [REDACTED] It is evident that the Ho Chi Minh Government has a substantial and continuing interest in Laos. The terrain of Laos forms a natural protective barrier to Viet Nam, is of some value economically, could serve as an outlet for population pressure in the Tonkin delta, and is the connecting link between Vietnamese in Viet Nam and in Northeastern Thailand. If Viet Nam entertains expansionist ambitions, it is very natural that they would be interested in Laos. Militarily, if they can keep French troops tied down in that area, this weakens the French opposition correspondingly in Viet Nam. And, finally, if the Viet Minh government is Communist controlled and obedient to the dictates of the world leaders of Communism, it is natural that, as Communists, they would be anxious to pick up Laos as one more step forward in their drive toward control of all Asia. In this game the ambitious and continually bickering princes are obviously no more than pawns, now being used by the Viet Minh as a matter of immediate advantage.

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